# THE DIRECTOR.

No. 4. SATURDAY, Feb. 14, 1807.

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Χείλων ἐρωτηθεὶς τίνι διαφέρουσιν πεπαιδευμένοι τῶν ἀπαιδεύτων; ἔφη ἐλπίσιν ἀγαθαῖς.

Chilo being asked, What constituted the difference between the accomplished and the ignorant? replied, The hopes of distinction and reward.

Chilo apud Diogen. Laert.

For the following letter on the connexion between genius and patronage, and on the reward and honour which the Grecian States bestowed on the arts and sciences, I am indebted to a learned correspondent, whose name it would be an honour for me to insert. The investigation is curious, and supplies food for reflection. My readers will probably unite with me in wishing a continuation of the subject.

*To the Director.*

It is the proud prerogative of genius, to create to itself distinction, and to exercise authority upon the minds of men. In the earliest ages of the world, superior personal prowess, and extraordinary efforts of valour, obtained the control and the command of armies, pointed out the paths of victory, and extended territorial possessions. Intellectual superiority went a great deal farther. The effect of personal superiority was relatively transient; that of the mind was perpetual. The rewards and honours and distinctions paid to each, were proportioned to the effects, which the mass of mankind felt and acknowledged. They bowed the knee to valour with reverence and admiration; but they adored the mind, which taught the salutary arts of life, which tempered the ferocity of the savage, and enlightened the gloom of ignorance.

Such must have been the emotions of men, when the mere useful arts alone were known and exercised; before the poet dipped his pen in the colours of the rainbow; before the artist gazed with rapture on the works of nature, and endeavoured to transfuse her beauties and her wonders to his canvass; before the statuary taught his marble to breathe.

The advance from the useful to the ornamental arts, must have been slow and progressive. Man first constructed his hut, to shelter him from the inclemency of the seasons; long must the interval have been before it was thought to decorate the walls with pictures, with statues, or with tapestry. Man must long have been familiar with the gloom and intricacy of the forest, with the hoarse murmur of the waterfall, before he could conceive the possibility of representing their effects with fidelity and interest a second time, and by artificial aids.

It is probable, that the first successful efforts of genius, as they must have provoked delight and excited astonishment, impressed the minds of ignorant and superstitious mortals with the idea of preternatural agency. Thus, perhaps, the first altars were constructed to Pan, to Ceres, or to Bacchus. But this would be too remote and too intricate an investigation. Our idea and intention is, to convey to the reader some ability to comprehend what was in different ages of the world the disposition of men, to compensate and reward the powers of intellect, which were exerted to meliorate and adorn the condition of life.

In this particular, in the remote ages of mankind, there could be no fixed principle. Rewards of merit must have been wayward and irregular; depending on the caprice, or the opulence, or local condition, of states or individuals, for whose use, or service, or gratification, the intellectual powers of genius were in any form exercised.

WHAT shall we say of the state of Athens and the caprice of its rulers, at a time when they boasted, and not without reason, of their proud pre-eminence in wisdom and the arts. They with solemn deliberation condemned Socrates to death. After a very short interval they devoted his accusers to the same punishment, and erected a statue of brass, Tertullian affirms it was of gold, to his memory. It was the work of Lysippus, and adorned one of the most conspicuous places of the city. Of the same people and their fickleness, it is told by Diogenes Laertius, in his life of Socrates, that upon some occasion (he quotes Heraclides as his authority) they condemned Homer to pay a fine of fifty drachmæ ευμ βεβλω as a crazy fellow. Yet at no great distance of time, we read that they ordered his poems to be publicly recited every fifth year at the festival of the Panathenæa. This same Homer, whose works were collected by Solon, commented upon by Aristotle, and so

cherished by Alexander the Great, that the following anecdote is related.

ALEXANDER having discovered among the spoils of Darius, a cabinet of extraordinary beauty, and adorned with pearls and precious stones; ordered the works of Homer to be preserved in it, that the richest production of human genius might be deposited in one of the richest specimens of human art.

THE same sort of waywardness and caprice in the distinction and reward of merit, even when he himself was personally benefited, is recorded of the first Darius: We read the tale in Herodotus.

DARIUS the first monarch of Persia, had passed, according to the venerable historian, seven days and as many nights without sleep, and in severe anguish, from a dislocation of his ancle. He employed in vain the most skilful medical profes-

sors of his country. At length he was informed, that one Democedes, a Greek physician of great celebrity, was languishing in servitude, and at no great distance.—The king sent for, consulted him, and was cured of his complaint. The reward he thought proper to bestow was whimsical enough. The physician received two pair of fetters of solid gold. Democedes remonstrated in one of the oldest puns upon record. "I was in slavery before, I presume it is your intention to double my calamity." Darius took the reply in good part, and sent the man to the apartments of his women, to whom he was introduced as the physician, whose skill had saved the life of their prince. It is related, that each of the women gave him either a golden vase, or, as some critics interpret the passage, as much of the golden coin of Persia called Darics, as he could take out of a vase, presented by each of the women, filled to the summit.

From the same writer it appears, this

same Democedes was retained by the Athenians as a public physician, at the inconsiderable salary of one hundred minæ.

To those who speculate upon the character of man, and the disposition shewn to reward merit, it must occasion no little perplexity to observe, that with the exception perhaps of this single country, the compensation made in return for medical aid and advice, has been mean and inadequate. We have here an example how they were estimated in Greece; they fared but little better at Rome, and even at the present period in France, no larger fee is given than half a crown. Yet it is not necessary to remark, that in a skilful physician every greater and better quality of the mind, with every adventitious aid of study and of science is not only required, but usually found. —From this digression, it may be proper to go back a little.

It is more than probable, that the first

rewards bestowed on merit of whatever kind, were donations of Land.—Pliny says,—Dona amplissima imperatorum et fortium civium quantum quis uno die plurimum circumaravisset.—Seneca also observes,—Ob virtutem et vere gestam rempublicam tantum agri decerneretur, quantum arando uno die circumiri potuisset. But that there was no method, or system, or consistency, observed in the proportion between rewards and merit, sufficiently appears from the following verses which are preserved by Diogenes Laertius, and by him ascribed to Crates of Thebes.

" Let a Cook have thirty pounds:
Two groats are enough for a Physician:
A Parasite shall have nine hundred pounds:
A Counsellor ὡς μαινομενον nothing:
A Courtezan one hundred and eighty pounds:
The Philosopher may be satisfied with a groat."

Such were the wayward feelings of

more antient times with regard to merit; it was distinguished indeed and rewarded, but with extreme capriciousness. In the Athenian republic, at the period of their greatest refinement and opulence, they who discharged the honourable and important functions of ambassadors to foreign states, enjoyed no nobler recompence than two drachmæ a day. Contrasted with this mean parsimony, what can have been more magnificent in design, more liberal in the disposition, or more costly in the gift, than the profusion lavished by superstition, or by ambition, on oracles, priests, and temples? —Reflect but for a moment on the donations made by Crœsus to the various oracles of Greece; or the monuments of art, and ornaments of value, possessed by the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, and the mind is lost in wonder and astonishment. To specify one example only: Crœsus, to demonstrate his gratitude to the divinity of Delphi, or rather perhaps to reward those whose sagacity and subtlety, anticipating what followed, gave such

oracular communication as they knew to be wanted, constructed one immense pile of golden goblets, cars decorated with gold and silver, with other splendid and valuable materials, and then set fire to the whole, in honour of the oracle. Of the mass of gold which ran together from this process, he made one hundred and seventeen tiles of gold of different sizes and purity; none of which however weighed less than one talent and a half. Upon these tiles he placed a lion of pure gold, which weighed ten talents. He sent also two large cisterns, one of gold, and one of silver, the statue of a woman, in solid gold, three cubits high, with a multitude of other things of such extraordinary value, that it would be no easy task to give their actual amount in money of our country.

The inference to be drawn from the above fact is this;—that as art must have made great progress in those very remote times, which is implied by the statues of the female, the lion, and the tiles of

gold; there must have existed a proportionable disposition to encourage and reward the merits of artists.—Of the skill of antient artists in every branch, many remarkable tales are told:—they occur in Pliny, in Athenæus, Pausanias, and other writers of antient times. They occur in Pancirollus, and a multitude of more modern compilers; and many also have been brought together by Dutens, in his ingenious and useful work on the discoveries of the antients attributed to the moderns. It may perhaps be sufficient to adduce an example;—It is related by Pliny of Theodorus of Samos.

It was this Theodorus who constructed the celebrated Labyrinth at Samos; but he was no less famous for having made a representation of himself in brass, which must ever be considered as a prodigious effort of genius.—The statue was acknowledged to be a strong resemblance of the artist. He held in his right hand a file: with three fingers of his left hand he held a carriage drawn by four horses;

but the carriage, the horses and the driver, were all so exceedingly minute, that the whole was covered by the wings of a fly.

HITHERTO we have considered only our proposed subject, with respect to Greece, where indeed our materials seem almost inexhaustible.—What must have been the state of arts, and what the proud and lofty feelings of artists most distinguished for their genius, when we read of Alexander the Great, that he forbad any painter but Apelles to attempt to give his picture; or any statuary but Lysippus to represent him in marble. It is more than probable, that both these men considered so honourable a reservation in their favour, the noblest recompence of their talents, as it was the surest testimony of their excellence.—Pericles, most probably, when crowned with two sprigs of olive, in the Forum at Athens, as the most meritorious of his fellow citizens, felt an emotion of triumph, far beyond the power of gold, or splendour of riches, to compensate. What prouder reward of merit can be pourtrayed than Archi-

medes received at the siege of Syracuse! In vain had Marcellus used every stratagem, and every power of military engines. His menace was despised, and all his attempts frustrated. Yet did the lofty Roman strictly enjoin, that no violence should be offered to the man, whose knowledge and whose skill so long and so effectually protracted his victory.

I SHALL, in a succeeding number make a transition to other countries, examine what was the retribution, and what the connexion, between genius and patronage; and conclude with some remarks as to encouragement of art and science, given at the present period among ourselves.

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I add the following letter respecting the FLY-FLAP.

*To The Director.*

SIR, 10 *Feb.* 1807.

IN your last number you notice a new correspondent, who has presented him-

self to you under the name of THE FLY-FLAP. I think it my duty to give you early notice that he is, as I shall prove from his own mouth, a foreign agent of the Manufacturers, Importers, and Vendors of what are called *Antient Pictures*, and employed to vilify the talents of our English Artists; I must therefore caution you to have no concern with him. I do not pretend to have any merit in my discovery, as the perusal of his work will make what I assert obvious to any one, for the following among other reasons:

1st. HE is entirely ignorant of the talent and professional knowledge of REYNOLDS and other Englishmen, who have written on the Fine Arts; and, therefore, when he wants eight pages of letter-press, he fills them with an uninteresting and inapplicable quotation, not from an English Artist or Connoisseur, but from a French metaphysician.

2dly. HE takes every opportunity of depreciating the genius of our country-

men. When he speaks of those BRITISH ARTISTS, who have laboured with talent and success, and with honour to their Country, during the preceding Summer, in the British Gallery, and have produced what has afforded surprise and pleasure to every judicious and candid Englishman, HE, like a Frenchman, objects (see page 17) to your introducing to public notice those artists whom he preposterously calls "the *Masters* and *Misses*, who "have copied the fine Pictures lent by "their Patriotic Proprietors"; and he presumes to tell us in the same page that "the principles on which the effect of "colouring is produced, the character of "the different schools, and their re-"spective excellence, are not understood "by our artists."

3dly. HE is, or seems to be, entirely ignorant of the talents and merits of our English sculptors; of one of whom you have given in your last number so pre-eminent an example, in the ACHILLES of our excellent Artist, BANKS. Besides

this, he has the effrontery to propose, what seems to be the chief object of his pamphlet, that a deputation shall be sent to an eminent Italian artist, a friend of this said *Monsieur Flyflap*, to solicit him to honour this country with his presence, and to prepare the public monuments, destined by a grateful country to those Heroes, to whom Britain owes its security and glory:—as if British Art were not competent to erect the memorial of British valour!

4thly. While he affects, in the French stile, to intermix personal allusions to your private character, he shews, as you have explained in your third number, that he knows nothing at all about you. In fact, it appears that what he says has no more relation to you personally, than to any of the numerous tribe of his continental friends, whom he wishes to be invited to this country, to instruct our British artists.

5thly, and lastly (not to weary you

and your readers with a load of *unnecessary* evidence on so clear a point) what decidedly proves him to be a foreigner, if not a Frenchman, *he fights under false colours;* and assumes the initials of a very amiable and respectable Englishman. This is a base and wicked fraud, intended to injure the character of a worthy man, who is beloved and valued by all who know him; and who, I dare say, is heartily ashamed of what *Monsieur Flyflap* endeavours to father upon him.

To conclude, Mr. Director, let me advise you not to meddle or make with this *Monsieur Flyflap.* The alien office has its eye upon him; and it is surmised that he is at least a foreign agent and emissary, if not a French spy.

A Friend to English Artists.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHIANA.

Having promised in my last article of 'Bibliographiana', to give some ac-

count of the sale of books, MSS. and belles lettres curiosities, in this metropolis, as being connected, in an obvious manner, with the existing state of literature, it has struck me, upon reflection, that a brief history of the principal book-sales in this country (by auction or otherwise) might not form an unappropriate introduction to these bibliographical sketches.

Let it be premised, however, that the pecuniary value of books is not to be regulated by their intrinsic or intellectual value. Dr. Johnson says, very justly, in his preface to Shakspeare, 'Books which are [sometimes] sought only because they are scarce, would not have been scarce had they been much esteemed'. It is unquestionably true, that for a few shillings, some of the finest works of genius, of morality, and of religion, may be procured: but the mischief is, that the fascinating and popular term of '*editio princeps*', drives too often from our recollection the more sensible one of *editio optima*. What can I possibly want

better than the *best edition?*' 'Many things', replies the thorough bred bibliographer, —'you want the *first**, the *prince of edi-*

* Perhaps among the rarest of the rare editiones principes in *Italian literature,* are the sonnets of Petrarch, 1470, and the Theseid of Boccacio, 1475. See Bibl. Smith, fol. CCCLXII—LXIII. Bibl. Askev. No. 684. This latter, the Theseid, was sold at the Doctor's sale, under the appellation of an *unique copy,* for £85. I dare not venture to affirm what it would now bring; and still less dare I pronounce judgment on the price of the Petrarch; of which, however, Mr. Beloe has given us some account in his 'Anecdotes of scarce books.' A celebrated literary character once informed me, that a bibliographical virtuoso sat off in a postchaise and four, from Dublin to London, to obtain this edition of Petrarch; but that he arrived too late, and was with difficulty kept from fainting away! Had he been a *Roman,* I suppose he would of course have laid violent hands on himself.

In *Greek and Roman literature,* among the rarest of the editiones principes are the Milan editions of Æsop and Isocrates, 1480—1493: the Florentine edit. of Lucian, 1496; the Roman edit. of Virgil printed before 1470; the Lucretius of 1473, printed by Ferrandus; and the Cæsar of 1469. Of all these 'libri longè rarissimi' I do not presume to indulge the reader with the prices.

In *English literature* I will mention only two very rare first editions: they are my Lord Bacon's Essays

*tions, a large-paper* *, or *an illustrated copy*†—' hinc iter ad astra !' What are

of 1579; and Master William Shakspeare's Plays, collected for the first time into a folio volume of the date of 1623: a perfect copy of this latter is worth —but I am entrenching on the trade.

* Take one example only, gentle reader, of the value of *large paper* copies. The Grenville Homer, (with three engravings, not to be found in the common copies) has brought at a sale £99 15s. To be sure, it is among the finest specimens of Greek typography in the world! The small paper affords no idea of the splendour of the large. Sometimes books are printed on paper of three or four different sizes; and a little volume of pretty anecdotes might be compiled concerning these variations in size. Woe betide the collector who finds he has the *third*, when he thought he possessed the *fourth* and *largest* size! *Imperial* is nothing, while *Atlas* or *Elephant* is to be obtained.

† An illustrated copy is the insertion of prints or drawings into a work, not originally published with it, illustrative of the persons or things therein treated of. I take this to be a guarded, legal-like, definition.

Of the various modes which taste has suggested, or caprice invented, for the embellishment of typography, none surely is more pleasing or useful than this of *illustration*. I could mention illustrated copies of Grainger, (a biographical history of England, selling

the Royal and London Institution Libraries compared with those, containing books 'where a rivulet of text meanders through a meadow of margin'—where the red, or blue, or green lines encompass and adorn the subject-matter, as the jeweller's gems do the artist's miniature—and where a duodecimo page is struck off or inlaid* upon an imperial folio, like a little Indian prince mounted on an elephant's

for under £2.) which have been estimated at 1500 and 2000 guineas! Boswell's life of Johnson, and Nichols's Anecdotes of Bowyer the Printer, are good subjects for this purpose—though I am not aware of any very famous illustrated copy of either of these amusing works.

* Of the art of *inlaying* upon a larger size paper, a great deal might be said—but I shall be concise. I believe the usual charge *is three pence a leaf* or 2 *pages*, exclusively of the vellum paper to which it is attached. The most curious instance I know of a small page of text being surrounded by an ample margin, like a cockboat sailing in the open ocean, is an edition of Bacon's Essays, printed by Bensley at the close of the last century, in the Cracherode Collection—of which, I understand, only four copies were taken off!

back? Besides are you indifferent to exterior splendour—has *Binding* no charms for you? What is natural beauty without appropriate dress?'

The greater part of this attack of the thorough bred Bibliographer, is extremely vulnerable; but, in one respect, I agree with him. *Book Binding* not only forms a test of the refinement and wealth of an age, but it engages a great number of poor and deserving fellow creatures, in a creditable and sometimes lucrative employment. I speak here of the labourers and journeymen. Master-binders are, in general, men of ingenuity, talent, and property.

It is only in an advanced period of civilization that all the foregoing bibliographical luxuries can be enjoyed. Let us change places with our ancestors, under Alfred, and into what a chaos should we be plunged?—roaming in wildernesses to seek for masters to teach us our A B C, and treasuring our *horn-books* with more

jealousy even than we now do our *copies on vellum* !*

It may not be amiss to present my readers with the opinion of a very celebrated modern historian on the subject of book-binding—for this forms a material feature in all 'Bibliographiana.'

'A taste for the exterior decoration of books has lately arisen in this country—in the gratification of which no small share of ingenuity has been displayed: but if we are to judge of the present predilection for learning by the degree of expense thus incurred, we must consider

* I really wish some bibliographer would collect all the anecdotes about vellum copies. Perhaps we can boast of possessing in this country the most valuable one in the world. I allude to the first edition of Livy, reposing in Pall Mall, within about twenty steps of the splendid repository of Mr. T. Payne. The only thing perhaps to put in competition with it is, a vellum copy of the Mozarabic Missal; of which an eminent and noble bibliographer is said to be in possession. For an account of this latter work consult the Harleian Catalogue, Vol. iii. No. 1528.

it as greatly inferior either to that of the Romans during the times of the first Emperors, or of the Italians in the 15th century. And yet it is perhaps difficult to discover, why a *favourite book* should not be as proper an object of elegant ornament, as the head of a cane, the hilt of a sword, or the latchet of a shoe.'

ROSCOE's Lor. de Medici, edit. 1800. vol. ii. p. 79, note.

THIS quotation is, I think, decisive in favour of splendid book-binding—and I trust that none of my readers, who are lovers of good or rare books, will suffer their ardour for this part of bibliographical virtù, to abate. If we put sumptuous frames round our pictures and prints, we may surely ornament our books in the same elegant manner.

PERHAPS some may like to know, that our ancestors, in the 15th and 16th centuries, almost always bound their books within covers formed of oak, or other stout wooden materials. On the outside

of this wooden binding, a coat of leather was usually laid, upon which was impressed a variety of ornaments and devices, according to the skill or fancy of the printer, or publisher. It is not uncommon to find very beautiful arabesque borders round some of these embellishments of heads or figures of distinguished characters. In the inner side of the binding, a large oval or square incision was sometimes made, into which was inserted a religious relic, usually a silver crucifix. This was guarded by a little door, which opened or shut at the pleasure of the owner—and thus the book presented at once an object of devotion, and a subject of studious inquiry.

GILT ornaments were not, I believe, introduced till the latter end of the 16th century. Those just mentioned were, what is now technically called (and imitated with great though not equal success) '*blind-tooling*:' a bibliographer well knows the force of this expression. Messrs. Herring, Kalthoeber, Staggemier, Mackinlay, Meyer,

and Armstrong are among the most successful binders in this department of the art. There is, however, a sharpness and decision in the blind-tooling of the antient binding, to which the moderns have not yet attained.

HAVING dilated on this part of 'Bibliographiana' much longer than was originally intended, I shall here close the subject—reserving for the next number of the Director, some account of the book sales of Sir Charles Scarborough, and Archbishop Tillotson, at the close of the 17th century. Mean time I take leave of my reader, by submitting to his consideration the following epistles, sent me by two female correspondents, in reply to my last article of Bibliographiana.

*Mr. Director,*

SIR,

YOU make an appeal to us females, in your last article of 'Bibliographiana'—but pray, Sir, what are we to understand by

'blazing-stars and comets, in the forms of illuminated Caxtons, and Vellum Alduses?' You know the natural timidity of our sex—and that we want not to be acquainted with such subjects of terror in our astronomical studies.

Accept, however, my best thanks for your account of the Paradise of Dainty Devices, and Will Painter's Palace of Pleasure. Could one procure these books at Lackington's or Lane's? and was Jack the Painter, of Portsmouth notoriety, a descendant of this Will?

I am, Sir, Yours,

Clarissa,

*To the Editor of the Director.*

Sir,

My grandmother, who is much given to reading of old books, has done nothing but rummage her chests in the garret, ever since the perusal of your 'Bibliographiana,' with the hope of discovering the Paradise of Dainty Devices, or Will

Painter's Palace of Pleasure—but hitherto without success.

She requests of me to entreat you for the loan of these works, and, in return, promises to bequeath you both her '*toothless* and *biting* satires;' of which she has a choice copy in her mahogany bureau.

Pray, Sir, be very particular in your account of *old romances and novels;* and let me know whether '*The Temple of Glass,*' and '*The Pastime of Pleasure*', printed about the middle of the 16th century, be worth five shillings or five pounds.

I am, Sir,
Respectfully yours,
Biblietta.

P. S. Is the first edition of '*The Twelve merry Gestys of the Widow Edyth*' preferable to the last? and who would you recommend me as a binder for my '*Romaunt of the Rose,*' black letter?

## *Royal Institution.*

THE fourth lecture of the REV. MR. DIBDIN, on *the rise and progress of English literature*, was devoted entirely to the life and writings of Chaucer.

He began by observing that the chronological priority of Gower to Chaucer, was by no means decided from the word 'disciple', used by the former in his 'Confession of a Lover;' for it appeared that this word was spoken by Venus as applicable to Chaucer's being *her* disciple and poet*, and not by Gower in reference to Chaucer's connexion with himself. T. Warton, Johnson, and Ritson, had concluded, from this very expres-

* The goddess addresses Gower in the following manner:

Grete well Chaucer, when ye mete,
As *my disciple*, and my poet;
For in the flow'rs of his youth
In sundry wise, as he well couth,
Of ditties, and of songs glad,
The which he for my sake made—
The land fulfilled is over all, &c.

sion, that Gower was anterior to our venerable bard; who it seems had composed all his principal works, except the Canterbury Tales, before the appearance of the 'Confession of a Lover,' in 1392-3.

The biographical accounts of Chaucer were then rather minutely entered into: and it was remarked that hardly one material fact, of the very few with which we were acquainted of Chaucer's life, was found in subsequent biographers, that had not been already noticed by Tyrrwhit.

A succinct account was then given of all the works of Chaucer, in poetry and prose; and the character of the poet was delineated from some strong descriptive passages, in the anonymous biography prefixed to Urry's edition of his works.

The 'Canterbury Tales' formed the next subject of discussion. Dryden's criticism on the poem, and Tyrrwhit's edition of it, were brought forward to particular notice: the latter was pronounced, on the authority of the late Mr. Ritson, to 'be the most erudite, cu-

rious, and valuable performance that has yet appeared in this country.'

Mr. D. concluded with adducing the testimonies of a number of antient and modern English authors, in praise of Chaucer, from Ascham to Warton; and remarked, that the incorrect state in which the Poet's works now appeared, was, in a great measure, to be attributed to the mutilated and imperfect condition of the MSS. Still there was room for an improved edition: MSS. had been carelessly collated and transcribed; and it was hoped, that our antient Bard would one day receive the same advantages of editorship as were already bestowed on Shakspeare, Milton, and Spenser.

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William Savage, Printer, Bedford Bury.